

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A method for detecting [the] presence of microorganisms in a sample, comprising the steps of:

(a) preparing a container comprising a medium portion [to have] which has a fluid culture medium for supporting [the] growth of microorganisms and [an] a fluid indicator isolated from the medium portion which contains [to have] a [color-turning] color changing CO₂ indicator for detecting the presence of microorganisms;

(b) [isolating] wherein said fluid indicator portion is isolated from said medium portion by a CO₂ gas-permeable membrane;

(c) mixing a sample in said fluid culture medium; [and]

(d) sealing said container entirely from outside atmosphere; and

(e) indicating [wherein] the presence of microorganisms [is indicated] by determining a color change of said CO₂ indicator.

2. (currently amended) A method for identifying [the] quantities of microorganisms in a sample, comprising the steps of:

(a) preparing a container comprising a medium portion [to have] which has a fluid culture medium for supporting [the] growth of microorganisms and [an] a fluid indicator isolated from the medium portion which contains [to have] a [color-turning] color changing CO₂ indicator for detecting the presence of microorganisms;

(b) [isolating] wherein said fluid indicator portion is isolated from said medium portion by a CO₂ gas-permeable membrane;

(c) mixing a sample in said fluid culture medium;

(d) sealing said container entirely from outside atmosphere;

[and]

(e) measuring time, starting from a moment when said container is sealed until a moment when color of said CO₂ indicator is turned into a predetermined color; [the] and

(f) identifying initial quantities of microorganisms [being] obtained by comparing measured time against contents of a table which holds pre-collected time data on each microorganism species of known initial quantities in known amount of sample.

7. (New) A method for identifying quantities of microorganisms in a sample, comprising the steps of:

(a) preparing a container comprising a medium portion which has a fluid culture medium for supporting growth of microorganisms and an indicator isolated from the medium portion which contains a color changing CO₂ indicator for detecting the presence of microorganisms;

(b) wherein said indicator portion is isolated from said medium portion by a CO₂ gas-permeable membrane;

(c) mixing a sample in said fluid culture medium;

(d) sealing said container entirely from outside atmosphere;

(e) measuring time, starting from a moment when said container is sealed until a moment when color of said CO₂ indicator is turned into a predetermined color; and

(f) identifying initial quantities of microorganisms obtained by comparing measured time against contents of a table which holds pre-collected time data on each microorganism species of known initial quantities in known amount of sample.

B2
cont.